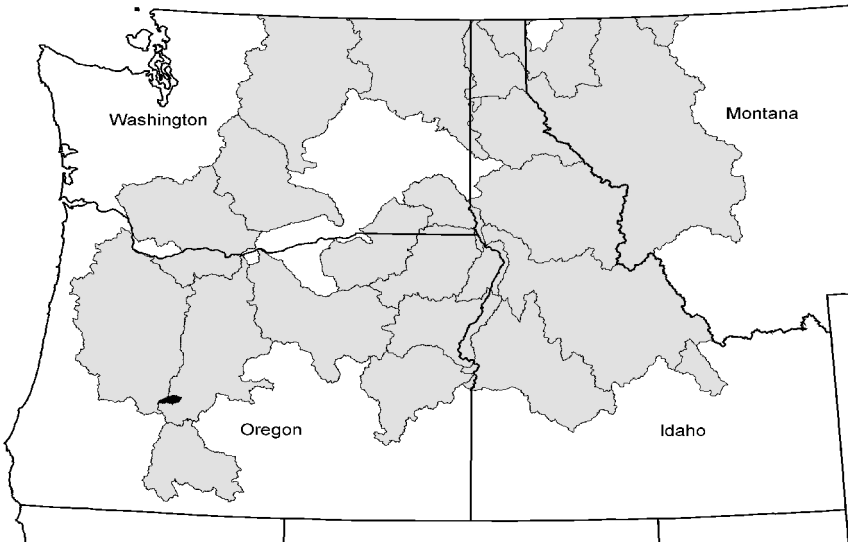
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Bull Trout Draft Recovery Plan

and proposed Critical Habitat

Odell Lake Recovery Unit

(CHAPTER 8)



What areas are included in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit?

The Odell Lake Recovery Unit consists of Odell and Davis Lakes, their tributaries, and Odell Creek, which flows from Odell Lake to Davis Lake. This unit is part of the Deschutes River basin and is located within Deschutes and Klamath counties in central Oregon. Odell Lake and Davis Lake were isolated from the Deschutes River by a lava flow about 5,500 years ago. This lava flow impounded Odell Creek and formed Davis Lake, isolating this small segment of bull trout from the rest of the bull trout population in the upper Deschutes River basin.

How much of the area is proposed as critical habitat?

In the Odell Lake Recovery Unit, about 11 miles of streams and 3,600 acres of surface lake area are proposed as critical habitat. This is approximately 29 percent of the stream miles and surface waters in the recovery unit.

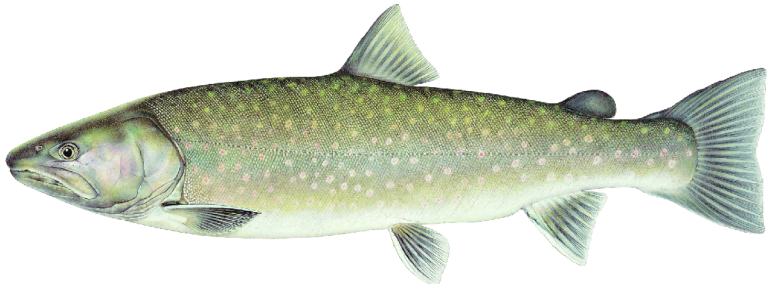
Who developed the draft recovery plan and critical habitat proposal?

The draft recovery plan for bull trout was developed through the collaboration of Federal, State, Tribal and private biologists working with representatives of local watersheds, private landowners and industry and conservation organizations. A total of 24 local recovery unit teams contributed to the development of the draft recovery plans for each of the recovery units. These recovery unit teams included experts in biology, hydrology and forestry, as well as natural resource users and stakeholders with interest and knowledge of bull trout and the habitats they depend on for survival. The critical habitat proposal was based in large part on information developed by the recovery unit teams and supplemented with even more recent information on the current distribution and habitat characteristics of the species.

What is the relationship between the draft recovery plan and the critical habitat proposal?

The draft recovery plan and critical habitat proposal are closely linked. The information developed by the recovery unit teams, and the science underlying that

information, are the basis for the critical habitat proposals. However, critical habitat is designed to provide for the conservation of a species by identifying those areas essential for conservation and requiring special management, whereas a recovery plan is a much larger blueprint providing guidance for the eventual recovery and de-listing of a species.



Who would be affected by recovery efforts and a critical habitat designation?

A recovery plan is advisory only and carries no regulatory authority. It is the Fish and Wildlife Service's estimation of the actions necessary for the recovery of the species. Agencies, communities or individuals are encouraged to take voluntary actions described in the recovery plan to benefit bull trout.

Federal agencies are required to consult with the Fish and Wildilfe Service on actions they carry out, fund, or authorize that might affect critical habitat. It is important to note that in most cases, this is already occurring under the section 7 interagency consultation requirements of the Endangered Species Act. Non-Federal entities, including private landowners, that may also be affected could include, for example, those seeking a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit under the Clean Water Act to build an in-water structure, those seeking Federal approval to discharge effluent into the aquatic environment, or those seeking Federal funding to implement private property improvements, where such actions affect the aquatic environment that has been designated as critical habitat. But again, in most cases where this link between activities on private lands and Federal funding, permitting, or authorization exists, consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is already occurring.

A critical habitat designation does not have any effect on non-Federal entities when there is not a Federal nexus. For example, swimming, boating, fishing, farming, ranching, or any of a range of activities normally conducted by a landowner or operator of a business not involving Federal funding, permitting, or authorization in order to occur would not be affected.

How was the draft recovery plan for each unit developed?

Recovery units were delineated based on the biology of the species and considerations for paralleling existing state conservation and fisheries management frameworks wherever possible. Recovery teams incorporated existing state conservation processes to the degree possible, depending on the degree to which they had been developed (for example, the Montana Bull Trout Restoration Plan, the State of Idaho's Bull Trout Conservation Plan, the State of Washington's Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon and the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds).

What is the status of bull trout in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit?

Odell Lake is the only remaining natural adfluvial (lake oriented) population of bull trout in Oregon and are classified as being at a high risk of extinction. Trapper Creek is the only tributary to Odell Lake with a known rearing and spawning

population of bull trout. In 2000, only 39 adult bull trout were captured in sampling efforts. Overall, little is known about the status and trend of bull trout in this recovery unit.

What are the threats to bull trout in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit?

The Odell Lake Watershed Analysis identified the following factors as suspected reasons for low bull trout population levels in the watershed: angling mortality, competition with other fish species for food, space, and spawning habitat, hybridization with brook trout, limited spawning and rearing habitat, partial barriers creating limited access to upstream habitat, and historic poaching.

What are the recovery goals and objectives?

The goal of the bull trout recovery plan is to ensure the long-term persistence of self-sustaining, complex interacting groups of bull trout distributed across the species' range so that the species can be delisted. To recover bull trout in the Odell Lake Recovery unit, the following objectives have been identified:

* Maintain current distribution of bull trout and restore distribution in previously occupied areas within the Odell Lake Recovery Unit.

* Maintain stable or increasing trends in abundance of adult bull trout.

* Restore and maintain suitable habitat conditions for all bull trout life history stages and strategies.

* Conserve genetic diversity and provide opportunity for genetic exchange.

What are the criteria for measuring recovery?

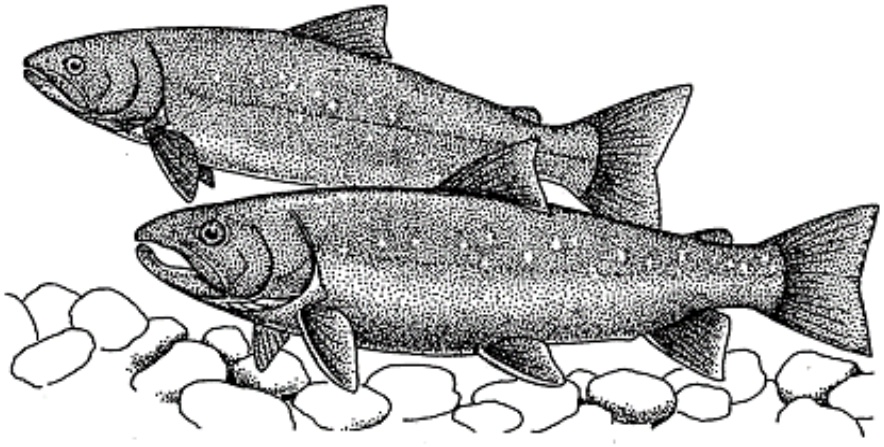
Recovery will be measured according to four criteria: distribution, abundance, population trends and connectivity in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit. The Odell Lake Recovery Unit plan includes specific, quantifiable standards for each of these criteria.

Distribution criteria will be met when Bull trout are distributed among one or more local populations in the recovery unit, depending on whether fish are found to exhibit homing fidelity to individual streams.

Abundance criteria will be met when estimated abundance of adult bull trout is at least 200 or more adults distributed in one core area.

Trend criteria will be met when adult bull trout exhibit stable or increasing trends in abundance in the recovery unit, based on a minimum of 10 years of monitoring data.

Connectivity criteria will be met when migratory forms are present in all local populations, with intact migratory corridors among all local populations in the recovery unit providing opportunity for genetic exchange and diversity.



What actions will be necessary to recover bull trout in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit?

Recovery for bull trout will entail protecting and restoring suitable spawning and rearing

habitat; improving passage and connectivity; preventing impacts of non-native fish and establishing fisheries management goals compatible with bull trout recovery. More details are available in the full text of the draft Bull Trout Recovery Plan, Odell Lake Recovery Unit, Chapter 8.

How long will recovery take?

A recovery plan is advisory only and carries no regulatory authority; therefore it is difficult to determine how long it will take to recover bull trout in the Odell Lake Recovery Unit. However, given our best estimate of what government agencies and others might do, it could take three to five bull trout generations (15 to 25 years) or longer before identified threats to the species can be significantly reduced and bull trout can be considered eligible for delisting.

How much will recovery cost?

Estimating the cost of recovery is difficult and complex, due to many variables and unknowns. However, the Odell Lake Recovery Unit team has estimated that recovery could cost about $1.6 million spread over 25 years. This includes estimates of expenditures by local, Tribal, State and Federal governments and by private business and individuals. The estimates are attributed to bull trout conservation but other aquatic species also will benefit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is soliciting comments from the public on potential costs.

How can I obtain copies of the documents?

The documents, along with maps, fact sheets, photographs and other materials may be found on the Pacific Region's website at http://species.fws.gov/bulltrout

How can I comment?

The Service will be accepting comments, beginning November 29, 2002, on its draft recovery plan for bull trout in the Columbia and Klamath river basins and in the St. Mary-Belly River Basin in Montana. Comments on the draft recovery plan will be accepted for 90 days, until February 27, 2003.

Comments on the draft recovery plan may be mailed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Snake River Basin Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, ID 83709; faxed to 208-378-5262, or sent via e-mail to: fw1srbocomment@fws.gov

Beginning November 29, 2002, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will accept comments from the public on the agency's proposal to designate critical habitat for the Columbia River and Klamath River distinct population segments of bull trout. Comments will be accepted for 60 days, until January 28, 2003. Comments on the critical habitat proposal may be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Regional Office, attn: John Young, Bull Trout Coordinator, 911 N.E. 11th Avenue, Portland Oregon 97232; faxed to 503.231.6243 or e-mailed to: R1bulltroutCH@r1.fws.gov

This is only a brief summary.

Please see full draft recovery plan and critical habitat proposal for complete details.